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ABSTRACT

Much is being emphasized in staff development in the area of reading instruction. It is important for each teacher to study and think reflectively about what can be done to improve the reading curriculum. One procedure that can be used is to hold a quality workshop based on the needs of teachers in reading instruction. The theme should be decided with teacher involvement and the guidance of the principal. In a workshop for 20 participants, during a general session, problem areas are identified and clarified. Teachers might volunteer to serve on a committee focusing on various problem areas. Committee reports to indicate progress can be shared with others. Faculty meetings, with ample materials of instruction and instructional assistance, may also be used to improve the reading curriculum. Teachers can then try out ideas gleaned from the meetings. To vary approaches in teaching reading, a videotape on model teachers using behaviorism as a psychology of learning may be shown and critiqued. Some teachers speak highly of visiting innovative classrooms where new approaches have been tried out with success in reading instruction. Observational visits by the reading supervisor can be beneficial for inservice development. Team teaching has built-in inservice education, with members upgrading their teaching skills and sharing worthwhile ideas with each other. Teachers also need to have ample opportunity to browse through and read materials from a professional school library. Another excellent way to improve the reading curriculum is to discuss student progress during a parent/teacher conference. (NKA)

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The Teacher, Reading, and Parents.

by Marlow Ediger

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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THE TEACHER, READING, AND PARENTS

Many writers and speakers on educational topics, as well as educators, believe that parental involvement in their child's education is of utmost importance. Too frequently, parents have not been actively involved in assisting their children to do well in school. Perhaps parents have been left out of planning for the education of their offspring or there has been parental indifference toward the welfare of the child in the school setting.

There are many factors that need to be taken into consideration by reading teachers in planning the curriculum. Among others, the following are important:

1. interests possessed by individual pupils in subject matter read.
2. the complexity level of the reading material.
3. purpose for reading that a teacher can develop within pupils.
4. meaning attached by pupils to story content in materials read.
5. amount of assistance that a pupil needs to achieve more optimally in reading (Ediger, 1997).

Teacher Education

Teacher education at colleges/universities lack experiences for future teachers in working with parents. I believe there should be at least a three semester hour course for all preservice teachers in working cooperatively with parents. The three semester hour course should involve students working directly with parents such as in parent/teacher conferences, open house, parent's night, and PTA meetings. The most important of the previously mentioned items for students to experience would be the parent/ teacher conference. Here, the student has the opportunity to notice what a professional teacher does to get parents to work cooperatively for the good of the child in reading and other curriculum areas. The goals of the parent/teacher conference should be spelled out here. How to fulfill meeting these goals needs to be in the offing. Activities and experiences to meet objectives of parent/teacher

conferences should be clear and outcomes orientated. Sequences in the strategy must be carefully considered. Certainly, after the conference, there needs to be a time for reflection to notice if the goals have been achieved. Also, it needs to be noticed which additional elements need to be covered in the future.

I will spell out a model conference situation between the teacher and parents in a conference setting for reading instruction.

1. have evidence ready to discuss with parents where the child is achieving presently in reading. The evidence may consist of actual reading by the pupil on video-tape or cassette.

2. display pupil written work related directly to reading such as outlines, summaries, journal writing, book reports, and precis' writing.

3. discuss reading problems faced by the pupil with parents.

4. detail what parents can do to assist the pupil to read better. It is important to agree upon a plan of action. If another parent/teacher conference is held in spring, comparisons can be made of evaluation results in fall.

5. conduct the conference in an atmosphere of trust and respect. Nothing is gained with hostile remarks by either teachers or the parents.

6. be well prepared for the conference and adhere to time limits in a schedule if others also have come for a conference.

7. get to know the aspirations parents hold for their offspring. Notice how parents feel toward their child. What benefits are the parents able to give the child, such as after school lessons of diverse kinds, such as playing piano. There are also parents who expect too much of their child with all the after school formal activities that are transpiring.

Students need to have ample opportunities to practice being involved in parent/teacher conferences in mock situations as well as in reality. the techniques and practices used, including the above seven flexible steps may be modified as the need arises. Parent/teacher conferences need modification if evidence suggests that changes should be made. Models are flexible devices that provide guidance and

direction, but are not absolutes. Students like to hear of diverse techniques that might be used in conducting these conferences. I have notice a few conferences where the adding of the involved pupil assists in improving the setting with parental involvement. Thus, the pupil may also comment about his/her school work and state improvements that need to be made in personal school achievement. Active involvement by the learner is important in ongoing lessons and units of study and might be equally important in parent/teacher conferences. The school principal may occasionally visit the conference setting to add to improving the personal child's curriculum. There are principals of schools that are highly interested in each pupil and make definite efforts to assist in the child's welfare and achievement. Each participant in the parent/teacher conference should help to develop the best objectives, learning opportunities, and evaluative procedures for the individual pupil. It is good to have follow up activities to determine how beneficial the conference has been to to the individual pupil.

The concept of parent involvement is interrelated with parent and teacher efficacy/involvement. Parental efficacy of self image, locus of control, developmental status, and interpersonal support are linked in more effective parent involvement. Specific teacher strategies in the areas of communication, shared learning, and guidance are specified as ways to nurture parental efficacy and strengthen parent-teacher relations (Swick and Broadway, 1997).

There are parents who have become involved as volunteers in school due to having participated in parent/teacher conferences. This is a point of contact between the home and school that is vital. Teacher education students then need to realize the importance of parent teacher conferences that are scheduled as well as unscheduled. By phone, teachers can call parents at home to commend a child's achievement at a given point or to call attention to where the child needs more help. Trust and cooperation needs to be built up in a positive way. There is so much parents can do in the home setting to assist their child in reading. These include the following ways:

1. reading orally to the young child. What is read should be interesting and capture learner attention. Ideally, when ready, the pupil should follow along with the words being pronounced by parents as the story is being read. However, as a major goal, the pupil should obtain ideas read and view the related illustrations in the library book. The child should be encouraged to bring library books home from the school library.

2. parents should be encouraged to take their offspring to the public library and checkout books, generally with no charge, to read at home. If the child is secure enough in reading silently or orally to parents, he/she should do so. Otherwise, the parent should help with word identification that the child is not able to identify.

3. library books should be given as gifts for birthdays and holiday seasons. Learners should realize the importance of obtaining and reading library books.

4. specific assistance may be provided pupils in the home setting in reading with consistent symbols and sounds when pupils reveal problems in reading.

5. parents need to read to themselves in order for pupils to see a model to emulate in reading.

6. rewards may be given to pupils for reading a certain amount or number of library books. Best it is if pupils read because intrinsically they enjoy the contents of reading. Hopefully, all pupils will read because of fascinations for subject matter contained in library books. Of all skills I possess, reading probable comes at the top. I am an avid reader and spend spare time in reading such as when waiting in line in a supermarket or when waiting for my car to be repaired. Much reading can be done by adults during those times mentioned as well as in the evening by myself or with the family. I find it fascinating to listen to what children and adults have read. I am sad when people do not read anything or very little. There is much that is missed in life by these individuals.

7. parents and the pupil need to realize that the latter needs to do

the learning in becoming a reader. The teacher does not have a magic wand in having a child become a good reader. The teacher must do the best job teaching possible, but it is the learner that must do the learning. Learning to read can be enjoyable. I do not remember having to struggle over learning to read. I do remember other struggles in life clearly such as having a mother who had a devastating stroke which left her as a vegetable, beginning when I was in the fifth grade or eleven years of age, until her death twenty-two years later. We remember certain things and not others and yet both were vital in one's life.

8. quality sequence in reading materials pursued is vital to ensure success in becoming a good reader (Ediger, 1996).

There are pupils who will need to work very hard to become good readers while others will hardly remember how they learned the complex act of reading. Pupils need to realize that beginning with the formal years of schooling, no class time must be wasted in learning to read. Pupils and parents who feel it is funny to disrupt the class are hurting themselves. Later on, they will realize how foolish it was to do these kinds of negative things. A few years ago at a Christmas gathering, my cousin, age sixty-two, told of how as a high school student, many students had ganged up on the school principal until he resigned. I asked the question if he had been incompetent. The answer was "No, we just wanted him to leave!" What a tragedy for pupils in school as well as for this unrepentant adult. Recently, a first grader said to the teacher at the beginning of the school year, I will see to it that you are removed form your teaching position unless you quit making us read so much." Children at a young age learn the sophisticated methods of

1. I will see to it that the school gets rid of you.
2. my mother said I did not have to do the work you assigned to me.

There are articles in top educational journals that state if the pupil did not learn it, it was not taught. I think we all have to realize that there

are teachers who truly do an excellent job of teaching and yet pupils are there to disrupt and not learn. Maybe, much more accountability should be the role of the pupil and the parents. When a pupil cannot read after graduating from twelve years of schooling beyond the kindergarten level, then there must be problems whereby it is nearly impossible for the pupil to learn to read. Educators, medical doctors, and psychiatrists may not be able to diagnose and remedy the problems involved. If a pupil graduates from high school and cannot read whatever definition is used to describe, "being able to read," the following questions need to be raised:

1. was it due to poor teaching for twelve grades? I cannot imagine having poor teachers in all classes where reading was emphasized during these twelve years.

2. what did parents do to help the pupil learn to read? Did the child attend school regularly unless there was a need to be absent, such as being in poor health? If poor health was the case, how many days of school were missed?

3. what kind of home life did the pupil have?

4. what kind of encouragement was given to the pupil to learn to read?

5. why did the pupil not have a desire to learn to read on his/her very own?

From this discussion, I recommend that teachers try to impress within all pupils the necessity of studying hard each school day and make the most of the time available in learning to read well. Time moves by rapidly and time wasted cannot be made up unless one considers the time that should be given to accomplish new goals in reading. Opportunities go by rapidly unless they are taken advantage of. These opportunities may come only once and then they are gone. Thus in learning to read, the individual throughout his/her lifetime must avail the self of opportunities in learning and developing. The student teacher needs course work and field experiences in possessing knowledge pertaining to involving parents in guiding pupil growth in reading

achievement. The regular classroom teacher and student teachers have identically the same responsibilities in the classroom.

Conferences at Other School Events

Too frequently, the annual parent/teacher scheduled conference is looked upon as the only time to discuss pupil progress in detail in reading. The time usually is too short for conference time when meeting with many parents and discussing their questions. Thus, there needs to be numerous additional occasions when the teacher may talk to parents about pupil progress in reading.

Using the telephone can be an appropriate media to use in talking with parents. I would suggest here that the messages be very positive. The pupil's progress in reading is then discussed first. This can lead into discussing problems faced by the learner in achieving needed reading skills. Thus, if a pupil is facing problems in using context clues in reading, this needs to be discussed. The child is too valuable as a human being to lose out on needed abilities and attitudes in order to do well in society. The teacher needs to provide ways then of parents helping the pupil to use context clues to unlock unknown words. If parents are not home at the time of the call being made, most homes have an answering machine to return calls. If the news is all positive about a pupil' progress in reading, the recorded voice might well be adequate for communication purposes. However, if suggestions need to be made, such as how to assist a pupil in using context clues, then a more extended two way street of communication is necessary.

Open house can be a time to meet with parents and, perhaps, discuss achievements and problems a pupil has in reading. Generally, the time is very limited in open house in speaking with parents. The teacher, however, needs to make the best use of time possible. The teacher here, as always, needs to be a caring person who desires to guide pupils to do well in school. Teachers are in a helping position; they do not sell items nor are they in the business world. Teaching is a helping profession and has its intrinsic rewards in assisting pupils and

parents in educating the former, in particular.

Too strengthen the teaching profession, the preservice teacher should attend parent/teacher conferences, open house, and PTA meetings, as well as other relevant school functions. Attending PTA meetings provides opportunities to meet parents and talk briefly to parents about their child's progress in reading. Course work and field experiences are vital here! Reading content cuts across all curriculum areas including mathematics, science, social studies, literature, art, music, and physical education. The relevance of reading in each curriculum area and to the future world of work for the pupil needs to be discussed with the involved parents.

Palardy (1997) indicates three characteristics of a successful literature based curriculum. These are... instruction is designed around and undergirded with one of the basic tenets of language learning. Reading, lots of reading, must be and is a basic activity...A second characteristic of literature-based instruction is that it provides youngsters the opportunity to self-select their own reading materials within a print-rich environment...Third, there is a notable amount of social interaction as youngsters share, debate, and compare the materials they read... Palardy (1997) goes on to say there are four critical needs that teachers must meet to implement successfully literature-based instruction. First, and perhaps most important, teachers must become familiar with the diverse and ever expanding world of children's literature, in itself a difficult and time-consuming task...Second, literature-based instruction requires teachers to have good planning and organizational skills, not only from an instructor's point of view, but also from a curriculum perspective...Third, an adequate supply of materials is essential. With today's funding crunch extant in most states and localities, this is not an insignificant element...Lastly, the need for accountability has to be addressed up front through cogent and close communication with parents, administrators, other teachers and the youngsters themselves.

PTA Meetings and the Teacher

PTA meetings provide further opportunities for parent/teacher involvement in discussing educational trends and pupil progress.

During a school year, there is much assessing of pupil progress. Much of the assessment information gathered during the school year serves as a basis for ongoing dialogue between teacher and students. Parents need to know how their children are doing. If teacher-based assessment is to inform public accountability, the evidence must take a form appropriate to this need. How can the classroom teacher effectively transform the data to suit these different audiences? And beyond these client groups, how can the evidence be effectively employed as teachers reflect on their instruction individually and as members of a professional community? Reporting in the new approach occurs at at least three levels. Student and teacher engage in an ongoing discussion of growth and quality, based on actual performance and a common understanding of the rubrics. Quality parent-teacher conferences for parent-student-teacher conferences in which students report and reflect...are the occasion for a summative report. Tied to reporting is grading, often a problem for alternative assessment advocates. If one believes that each student can excel (or not excel) in a variety of ways, then what is the meaning of a grade? On the other hand, in a competitive society such as ours, parents often want to know, "How well is my kid doing,?" Finally a number of districts and states are turning to alternative assessment methods as a basis for public accountability. The "public" is the audience for these reports; practically speaking, the public wants numbers, averages, "hard data," and "bottom lines." The challenge is to transform soft data collected under nonstandardized conditions into trustworthy and interpretable indicators (Graves, Van Der Brock, and Taylor, editors, 1996).

I would like to discuss at this point issues in the teaching of reading. There appears to be a continuous debate between advocates of testing to determine pupil achievement as compared to the use of portfolios as an alternative assessment method. I believe portfolios have

a tremendous advantage over test scores solely, in reporting pupil achievement. With a variety of pupil products in a portfolio, the scope of what is being evaluated for the pupil is much broader and more inclusive.

Whole language versus phonics approaches in the teaching of reading emphasize another continuous debate. I believe both whole language and phonics should be emphasized in the teaching of reading. If whole language is used only, pupils might well be at a loss in having an approach in identifying unknown words. If phonics is stressed excessively, then ideas to be obtained in reading may suffer. Therefore, I strongly encourage teachers to emphasize reading for meaning and also phonics instruction as it is needed, not for the sake of teaching phonics. Phonic principles and generalizations taught should be relevant in learning to read better. Phonics instruction should be vital for the task at hand and that is to identify unknown words in reading. I have observed phonics lesson after phonics lesson taught with no attempt made for pupils to apply what has been learned.

Stop the sound and fury of the phonics vs. whole language war. We need both...Beware of the "one true method" imposed from on high! Different children learn to read differently (Chase, 1997)..

Another issue in reading that may be discussed with parents is the use of workbooks. Workbooks should assist pupils to comprehend better what has been read and also to become more skillful in analyzing words so that identification of unknown words in reading is possible. Workbooks should stimulate interest in reading, not minimize or destroy it. Content in workbooks need to guide learners to achieve vital goals in reading instruction. They may be one activity, among others, in teaching pupils how to read. Activities chosen for pupils in workbooks should be reasonable in length. They should be relevant in emphasizing a certain objective such as having young pupils learn to use picture clues to identify unknown words. The exercises pupils work in from the workbook should relate to a larger whole or be related to ongoing lessons and units of study in reading. Isolated activities should not be

stressed, nor should the workbook be used as busy work merely to occupy pupil's time.

PTA meetings may lend themselves to discussing issues such as the above involving testing versus portfolio use to appraise pupil achievement, whole language versus phonics in reading instruction, as well as the issue involved in using workbooks in the teaching of reading. Perhaps, teachers and the principal could arrange a panel presentation to present at a PTA meeting on issues in teaching reading. Questions from the audience should help clarify ideas in reading instruction.

Teachers sometimes feel as if there is not enough time to interact adequately with any one parent at a PTA meeting. I would say make the best use of time possible to communicate with parents. Bring in as much information as possible pertaining to understanding and improving the reading curriculum. The trained and educated teacher must have much knowledge pertaining to the teaching of reading and needs to share this information with patrons in the school district.

There are numerous civic and social organizations in the community in which reading teachers may speak and tell about what is done in the curriculum to assist pupils to learn as much as possible in becoming a good reader. There should also be adequate time to answer questions from the audience pertaining to reading instruction.

Human Relations in the Reading Curriculum

There are many times in which the teacher needs to be strong in human relations when working with children and adults. These times include parent/teacher conferences, open house, and in teaching and learning situations. The teacher is in a critical situation here. Parents may become angry at the teacher and school for various reasons, logical or illogical.

First, the teacher must never show anger toward parents. If an angry parent comes to school, take time to work in a positive manner with the problems involved. Pupils do go home and say things that did not really occur in school and sometimes there is a misunderstanding by

the parent of what the child said. When our three children were growing up, we asked them what they learned in school and so often the answer was, "nothing." Our children were so busy wanting to play that they had no time to discuss what was learned in school. At the supper table, it was quite obvious that much had been learned in school that day when our children started to tell about what they had read and the humorous things
that happened that day in school. Sometimes, our children would say more about what was learned than on other days. In general, we were happy, as parents, as to what was taught and learned in school.

After the angry parent has become more rational, then discuss what he/she has in mind as a problem. I like to look at problems in reading as something to identify and then solve. The solution must then be tried out to see if it truly works. If not a new approach needs to be used (Ediger, 1997).

There are parents who come in to talk to the teacher in a friendly, concerned manner. These parents too may wish to discuss what to do with a child that is not doing well in reading. The teacher must take time to discus the problem thoroughly. It is a professional responsibility to do so. The parent needs to take adequate time to discuss the problem with the reading teacher. If the child reads in a somewhat halting manner, the learner may need help in reading in thought units or phrases. Additional ways to solve the problems might involve

1. securing more reading materials on the reading level, not frustrational level, of the pupil.

2. reading together more selections with others in a whole language approach so that the learner can hear and see the words pronounced accurately. Then the pupil has a better chance to read less haltingly and comprehend the contents better when rereading occurs. In this way, the involved pupil receives more practice in identifying words in a fluent manner.

It is important to accept parents and pupils in a respectful way. No one should be minimized nor treated abruptly or rudely. The teacher, as

a professional, must always be respectful regardless of the feelings parents bring in as complaints. If parents reveal extreme negative feelings, the principal should be contacted and cooperatively with the teacher work with the dissatisfied parents. Problem solving is the best procedure to use in situations involving parental complaints. With the solving of problems, better human relations should be an end result. Sometimes, teachers, like other professional, do not have answers to some of the problems brought in by parents pertaining to reading instruction. The remedial teacher, the guidance counselor, and the supervisor need to be resourceful in suggesting specific specialists who might be able to guide the pupil to overcome difficulties. Severe behavioral difficulties that are beyond the capability of help that a teacher can provide may make it so that the involved pupil does not achieve at all in reading. The extreme cases of dyslexic behavior in reading might tax a true specialist that specializes in helping these kinds of learners. With milder cases of dyslexia, the teacher may receive assistance from the remedial reading teacher. Methods such as the following may be used for these pupils:

1. tracing plastic raised letters moving from left to right only.
2. writing one or more supervised sentences from left to right solely.
3. varying the materials used from using raised plastic letters to the use of sandpaper letters in writing strictly from left to right.
4. looking at a sequence or illustrations from a left to right perspective. Each illustration needs explaining moving from left to right therein.
5. reading numbers on a yardstick in a left/right progression.

...there is now overwhelming evidence that a primary cause of variability among children in growth in early word reading skills involves individual differences in the ability to process the phonological features of a language. At present, the most important of these phonological skills appears to be phonological awareness and the rapid automatic

naming ability...(Torgesen and Hecht, 1996).

In summarizing implications for teaching pupils with disabilities in reading, the following emerge:

1. If preventative remedial approaches to reading instruction with reading disabled children are to be successful, they must lead to the development of accurate and fluent text-based word reading skills.

These children also may need special instruction in comprehension skills, but the first goal of instruction should be to ensure that they can read words fluently and accurately.

2. As the basis for early independence in word recognition, and gradual development of effective visual codes for words, the early growth of alphabetic reading skills must be fostered.

These are precisely the reading skills that most reading disabled children have difficulty with.

3. As a basis for the acquisition of the alphabetic principle, instructional interactions must stimulate the growth of phonological awareness.

Phonological awareness provides the basis for understanding and utilizing the alphabetic principle in reading.

4. In order to receive the maximum number of opportunities to acquire accurate orthographic representations for words, children must be taught explicitly to integrate the use of phonological cues and context in order to arrive at accurate pronunciations of words in text... It also seems important to involve reading disabled children in manageable and meaningful reading experiences from as early in the instructional process as possible (Torgesen and Hecht, 1966).

Pupils with dyslexia need much practice and guidance in moving from left to right in printed and other kinds of materials. The reading teacher needs to study and use information pertaining to dyslexia and how to assist a pupil with this problem. Knowledge needs to be present of what to say to parents in advising them on how to work with their

children in the home setting when dyslexia is in evidence. Quality human relations stresses the importance of being knowledgeable and helpful when called upon to guide pupil progress in reading.

Observing Where There Is High Parental Involvement

Reading teachers need to observe in schools where there is high parent involvement. Time off from teaching and paying needed expenses for these observational visits is time and money well spent. There are many questions that teachers should have before making these arranged observational visits. Journal articles read and teacher education textbooks used in studying how to involve parents before visiting schools where there is much success in involving parents are prerequisites! I have observed the following in schools where a considerable number of parents are involved in working with their children in the home setting and in the school arena.

1. parents feel that the public schools and their child's education is important.
2. parents believe they can help their child to achieve in the home setting which will assist in achieving more optimally in school.
3. parents liking teaching and learning believe that helping in the school setting is enjoyable and personally satisfying.
4. parents believe that all children are important and need to learn as much as possible.
5. parents believe that the center of life should be the home and the school.

Those schools and individual teachers who appreciate the role parents can play in school send out notices for parental assistance in the educational arena. A personal welcome is also given at parent/ teacher conferences, open house, and PTA meetings for more parental involvement in the school setting. For those who assist in the classroom, guidelines are printed and distributed so that the parent feels welcome and has considerable knowledge as to what is desired as parental help.

The classroom teacher further welcomes and provides necessary communication as to how the parent is to help in teaching and learning situations. Schools need to develop brochures and school publications whereby parents have an inward desire to work in school and feel rewarded intrinsically for doing so. Preservice teachers should find that working with parents has many rewards. They feel more inclined then to use parental assistance in their own positions later as public school teachers.

Parents should have a voice in determining what they wish to contribute in the school and classroom setting. The following were offered by parents at one school:

1. serve as a resource person on environmental problems. This person was a biologist by profession.
2. serve as a room mother for planning and serving holiday treats to pupils.
3. listen to pupils read and read stories orally to pupils.
4. help check pupils' papers in arithmetic and go over the errors with individual pupils. This person had been a former elementary and secondary mathematics teacher.
5. assist in taking pupils on excursions such as to the local museum or one room school house.

It appears quite obviously that parents do have a desire to help out in a positive manner in the classroom. They do participate actively when asked to do so and they can assist pupils to achieve, develop, and grow. One school I visited in supervising student teachers and cooperating teachers used a brain-storming approach in determining how parents can assist in the school setting and classroom. Here, a former art teacher who became a housewife wanted so badly to be involved in children's art work. Later, she came to school to show several classrooms, art work she had completed including the making of five beautiful puppets which she had used in a program at a local club meeting. There is much talent in any community and these talents

should be used to improve objectives, learning opportunities, and evaluation procedures for pupils in the classroom setting!

A Reading Party

As a first grader in a five teacher rural school, I participated in a reading party during the 1934-1935 school year. I was a first grader in a combination room with second graders. Invitations were sent home with pupils for the date of the reading party. Each pupil, with teacher assistance, selected a story to read to the parents who were present. There were thirteen first graders who participated. Parents could then hear and listen to their child read orally to the group. Pupils individually had chances to practice reading their selections over and over again so that the oral reading activity for each was a success. I must say the event was enjoyed by pupils and parents. Refreshments were served, such as coffee and doughnuts, after the reading party. This event was held during the height of the depression years with great success! The event sticks out clearly in my mind. Since the reading party was for first graders in the combination room, these pupils with teacher assistance displayed the following as it related to ongoing lessons and units of study in reading:

1. art work to indicate compression of content read from a library book.
2. a small mural made by two pupils to show the setting where a story took place.
3. several dioramas to reveal the character of a story read by learners.
4. dictated work to show an experience chart developed cooperatively by pupils. Yes, we had experience charts in our school during the early to middle 1930s.

The reading party was used as a way to communicate with parents in the teaching of reading. Parents cold see and listen to their offspring read orally. They could look at the products of pupils from the reading of

children's literature. Of major importance was the asking of questions by parents of the teacher as to what could be done to assist the pupil to improve in reading. I felt that the conversation was rich indeed in parents learning more about reading instruction and and about how to assist their offspring to achieve more optimally in reading. Parental involvement was certainly in evidence here in developing and in understanding better the reading curriculum.

Conclusion

Early in the primary grade reading program, adequate emphasis should be placed upon writing as being directly related to reading instruction. We have noticed in the experience chart that the teacher records the ideas of children for content to be read aloud cooperatively, by the teacher and the children. Here, children have had adequate opportunities to see talk written down. Their own ideas then have been encoded or written on the chalkboard, chart, or computer.

Pupils individually may also dictate content for the teacher, an aide, or other child to record. As pupils become increasingly more mature with print materials, they should do their very own writing. After the act of writing has been concluded with very short or more lengthy papers, learners need to reread the contents. Other pupils will also wish to share their written ideas.

Print is one way of sharing ideas and must be used widely to increase pupil proficiency in reading and writing. Multiple intelligences theory (Gardner, 1993) emphasizes that pupils possess nine areas of intelligence. These are verbal/linguistic such as in reading and writing, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial such as in art work, musical, bodily/kinesthetic such as in physical activities, interpersonal such as in cooperative learning, intrapersonal such as in personal endeavors, scientific, and the human experience such as in history. Thus there are numerous ways of showing achievements in any curriculum area, according to multiple theory intelligence. Multiple intelligences theory stresses pupils reading and in different curriculum areas. Here, reading

of print materials may also be correlated, for example, with visual/spatial intelligence such as a pupil doing art work related to what was written or printed. Involving parents in all educational endeavors is the challenge so that the home and school work together for the good of the child.

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